

## **Backgrounder**

### **Gaming**

- Gaming jobs: Employment at casinos on the Mississippi Gulf Coast is back at pre-Hurricane Katrina levels.
- Number of jobs in October: 13,519
- Opening of Silver Slipper on Nov. 9 will boost number past 14,000
- \$1.5 billion worth of capital in construction alone.

### **Manufacturing**

- Legislation enacting what The Wall Street Journal called the most comprehensive tort reform legislation in the country has reduced incentives to file frivolous lawsuits.
- Mississippi manufacturers resilient following Katrina
- Some reports have said Mississippi lost 15 percent of its manufacturing jobs in the last year. According to Mississippi Department of Employment Security data, the actual figure is a 1.3 percent decline from August 2005 to August 2006.
- August 2005 was marked by Katrina. In August 2005, Mississippi had 178,400 manufacturing jobs, which dropped to 172,600 in September 2005 - a loss of 5,800 jobs in the wake of the storm. We've added back 3,500 of those manufacturing jobs.

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- It's a major accomplishment for manufacturing's resiliency to be within 1.3 percent of its pre-storm level in a time of rising costs at home, intense foreign competition and a nagging worker shortage.
- With the pressures, manufacturing is down nationwide, but manufacturing still remains one of the engines that pulls the U.S. and world economies.
- The resourcefulness of Mississippi manufacturers continues to play a major role in pulling the Gulf Coast and all of Mississippi to new heights of prosperity.

### **Aerospace industry**

- Aurora Flight Sciences. North American Eurocopter. Miltec. ATK Southern Composites are all recent announcements of new aerospace manufacturing facilities coming to northeast Mississippi and expansions of facilities already in the state signal Mississippi's shift to compete for high-skill, high-paying jobs.
- Our state continues to gain recognition for its competitiveness in the global marketplace and its ability to attract large, international firms who want to invest and prosper here.
- The quality of our workforce, a favorable business climate and our quality of life are key elements in drawing businesses to the state.
- Currently, more than 2,900 Mississippians work in the aerospace industry — more than 300 of those in northeast Mississippi. With the addition of jobs from new projects and facility expansions announced recently, the Mississippi Manufacturers Association estimates that

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total number of aerospace jobs in the state will increase to more than 3,700, with nearly 700 in the northeast corner of the state.

- We're attracting firms in a number of industries such as steel, polymers and automotive, and other industries such as chemical, paper and petroleum are expanding their presence in the state.
- With the many recently announced projects — added to already established aerospace firms in the state such as Eaton, Boeing, L-3 Communications, Lockheed-Martin and Raytheon — Mississippi continues to strengthen its manufacturing base and secure a position in the high-tech market.
- The growth of the state's aerospace industry shows the state is making a historic transition to compete in a global economy.
- From military helicopters to unmanned aircraft to guided missile R&D to space vehicle components, Mississippi is rapidly establishing itself as a hub for aerospace manufacturing.
- Throughout the state, new or recently announced projects include Northrop Grumman's unmanned aerial vehicle aircraft production in Moss Point, Rolls-Royce's jet engine testing facility at the Stennis Space Center in Bay St. Louis and GE Aviation's jet engine manufacturing facility at a yet-to-be-determined site in Mississippi. Most recently, Global Military Aircraft Systems announced plans to move its company headquarters to the state, bringing highly skilled engineering and technical jobs to Mississippi.
- Stennis Space Center is America's largest rocket and engine test complex, and its high-performance computing capability ranks 10th worldwide. Stennis is now home to the NASA Shared Services Center, which consolidates common services performed agency-wide in the areas of financial management, human resources, procurement and information technology.

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- These operations are supported by the academic and R&D programs within the Aerospace Engineering School at Mississippi State University, which has proven to be a greenhouse for homegrown aerospace companies. And our community and junior colleges provide specific skills training to prepare our people to succeed in these highly sought after jobs. In many cases, companies are working with educators to develop the labor pool needed in their operations.
- The growth of Mississippi's aerospace manufacturing industry is important for many reasons. Changes in the global economy have made it easier for low-skill, low-wage jobs to move overseas, necessitating a shift in how we view manufacturing and the jobs we need to bring to the state.
- Mississippi has shown that it can compete for and attract higher-skill, higher-wage jobs such as those in the aerospace industry.
- A number of factors have contributed to the success of the aerospace industry in the state.
- In 2005, legislation decreasing the unemployment tax burden of businesses also created a Workforce Training Enhancement Fund, which provides approximately \$20 million a year for workforce training activities to supplement community and junior college workforce training dollars.
- In 2004, the Skills Training Tax Credit Program was created, providing tax benefits for companies that work with their local community and junior colleges to educate their employees.

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